Accidents due to human error

1297. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:
SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the railways were to adopt ways and means to reduce railway accidents due to human error; and

(b) if so, the steps taken in this direction and the impact thereof on the accidents?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. As a result of various steps taken to minimize failure of Railway staff, the number of consequential train accidents attributed to failure of railway staff during the last few years have come down from 293 in 2000-2001, 248 in 2001-2002, 186 in 2002-2003, 161 in 2003-2004 to 133 in 2004-2005.

Measures for cost reduction in railway operation

1298. SHRI B. K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether to offset the likely reduction in general budgetary support the Railways would focus on cost reduction on operation through making most trains run with atleast 24 coaches, increase their speed and increase occupancy rate in upper classes;

(b) whether increasing the speed of trains on trunk routes would result in better and efficient re-deployment of the same rake; and

(c) what other measures are contemplated to effect cost reduction in railway operations for the coming year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) With a view to satisfying the passenger demands, Railways not only augment popular trains up to a maximum of 24 coaches but also speed up the trains subject to operational feasibility and availability of resources.

(b) Yes, Sir. In some cases it may result in better and efficient re-deployment of rolling stock.

(c) It has been a constant endeavour on the part of the Railways to

avoid wasteful expenditure and control its growth. The Railways have been taking number of austerity/economy measures a list whereof is given below:

(1) Improving staff productivity by better manpower planning

(2) Better asset utilization

(3) Inventory management

(4) Control over fuel consumption through energy audit for bringing improvement in specific fuel consumption

(5) Prioritization of expenditure on works/activities for better use of available resources, etc.

Besides the above, austerity is maintained in the areas of administrative and office expenditure like hospitality, commercial advertisement and publicity, air travel, overtime allowance in offices, etc.

Rail Tariff Regulatory Authority

1299. SHRI MATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission has emphasized the need for setting up of a Rail Tariff Regulatory Authroity to regulate business segment of the Railways;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what measures the Railways are taking to develop the rail infrastructure with the help of private partnership?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Setting up of Rail Tariff Regulatory Authority was included in the Tenth Five Year Plan Mid-Term Appraisal Document. However, Ministry of Railways is of the view that there is no need for setting up of separate Authority as the proposals for adjustment in Railway fares and freight rates included in the Railway Budget are debated and approved by the Parliament.

(c) Following measures have been taken to develop rail infrastructure with the help of private partnership:

(i) Formulating Guidelines for encouraging public-private partnership.